

April 22, 2019

Dear FWISD Parent or Guardian:

A year ago I sent you a message explaining how your child's classroom education was being disrupted by fake social media threats aimed at individual students or at schools in general. If you will remember, I asked that you, as parents, know where your children are going on social media, who their friends are and what messages they may be sending. I believe your involvement helped stem that wave of threats – at least for a while.

Now, unfortunately, we are right back to multiple and daily disruptions caused by threats promising school shootings, and other harmful acts. These online “prank” threats are causing just as much, if not more, disruption than before.

I cannot emphasize strongly enough that such acts are a CRIME. Some of the students involved in sending these threats have already been arrested. Make no doubt about it - we will prosecute anyone who perpetrates such criminal activity.

Students believe they are safe from detection when they send "prank" social media posts that threaten school safety. Fortunately, police investigators can usually identify the person or address where the threat originated. And when identified the police will come to that child's house, day or night, ask to search it, and pursue all criminal charges on behalf of the District. You also need to understand that any student who further distributes such prank messages can also be charged with a crime.

Parents, as I've written before, you can assist the Fort Worth ISD, our local police departments, and perhaps even your own child by discussing this important message within your family. This matter has become such a problem that it is imperative that you know all that you can about the social media options that might be luring your children. The “I didn't know” excuse will not minimize the potential consequences your child could face.

Many times students know who is sending threats against classmates and/or the schools before law enforcement knows. When they know of, or suspect that such activity is taking place, students should immediately:

- Tell a responsible adult- you (the parent), a police officer, a teacher, a school administrator. Students can also contact Crimestoppers anonymously at 817-469-TIPS. There will be a monetary reward for anyone who makes a report that results in an arrest or a criminal case.
- Never repost the threat to social media or other online platforms.
- Understand ALL threats are treated as real and time is of the essence in all such instances until investigations determine the legitimacy of the threats.

Parents, please, help us wipe out this scourge of senseless threats that is stealing important instructional time away from our children and resulting in heightened anxiety for students, parents and staff.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KPS' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kent P. Scribner, Ph.D.